

ANDREWS OF THE APRIL FLOOD

By WM. H. OSBORNE

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Andrews rose from his seat and looked down upon the girl. He fumbled with his hat.

"I'm sorry," he faltered. "I thought it right to be different. I'm getting along so well over in town, and this spring I thought perhaps that we—that I—might build somewhere around here and"—He paused. "I'm sorry," he repeated.

The girl flushed. She glanced over toward the mountain. It was in the month of April, but the mountain top was still white with the winter's snow. "I'm sorry, too," she replied in a tone that indicated that she was not so sorry as she seemed. Andrews started off. Suddenly he returned and once more laid down his hat.

"Louise," he exclaimed impulsively, "tell me something. I can stand it, and I want to know. We've grown up together. You can afford to be frank with me. Is there anybody else?"

She slowly shook her head. "No one in particular," she said.

"What is it, then?" he persisted. She looked him full in the face.

"I'll tell you, Stephen Andrews," she said. "It is not your fault, but you are not my kind of a man. Oh, I know," she added hastily, "you are a college fellow and what these people call smart and all that"—She hesitated. "I don't know," she continued, "whether I have been reading too many novels in my time or not, but I—I—there must be something more in the man that I—I don't know just how to express it. I think you understand."

Andrews smiled in spite of himself. "You mean," he said, "that I wear spectacles and that I don't tin up quite so much as the other fellows in the summer. I am not impulsive. My name is not Ivanhoe. Is that it, Louise?"

The girl sighed and looked off toward the white hills. "I do like strong, muscular men," she admitted. She had no hesitation in saying this to Andrews, for she generally said to him just what she meant. Andrews smiled a grim smile. He had never told her that he held the record for boxing and wrestling in his college class, and he did not propose to tell her now.

"Like John Duryea, for instance," he suggested. Again the girl flushed, for as she sat there she had contrasted the two men, somewhat to the detriment of the man before her.

"As you please," she answered, a bit coldly. Suddenly she turned to him. "You said," she went on, "that I thought you were not impulsive. Tell me honestly, if this house were on fire, and I were upstairs, and you were down below, would you brave the danger that might exist and rush in to my rescue at the risk of your life? Would you do that?"

Andrews smiled again. "Would John Duryea?" he asked. The girl nodded. "He would—I know he would," she answered. Andrews shook his head.

"It's a hard thing to answer," he replied. "Circumstances might alter cases. I should stop to think first, and then—"

"And then?" pursued the girl. "I can't tell," returned the man. "I would do the best I could. It's a nice question," he added.

He said all this in an amused sort of way. The girl was serious. Andrews became serious again. He knew too well that the girl was uttering her thoughts—thoughts that with other girls exist, but remain unuttered. He realized with bitterness that the man who looks and acts like a hero is the man, after all. Duryea was such a man.

"I am sorry," he reiterated, and he went.

John Duryea was not a youth of intellect, but he had a kindling eye, and he had that appearance of animal courage and spirits that is so taking. Andrews envied him. He would have given all his intelligence and experience, he would have relinquished all the lessons he had learned in youthful adversity and hard work, to be in the shoes of this man Duryea.

The snow on the mountains melted—melted in a day and a night. The river rose. It rose so much that the town talked of it. The roar of the waters could be heard afar off. Duryea called at the girl's house. "Come down and see the flood," he said. They had been down before, but it was at all times an interesting sight. They stroved toward the long bridge. The waters roared under this bridge like a cataract. The eye could detect clearly the trembling of its timbers.

"We'd better not go on the bridge," exclaimed the girl, halting just before they reached it. Duryea threw back his shoulders.

"Come on," he said, with an air of bravado. "I'll take care of you." The girl looked at him with admiration and laughed. They went. She shivered as she felt the timbers tremble beneath her feet. The man lightly put his arm about her. It was good to feel his strength. It gave confidence. Suddenly he pointed down the road.

"Look!" he shouted in her ear. "Here comes Andrews!" The girl looked. Sure enough, it was Andrews, running and waving his hand. He was warning them off the bridge, but they waved lightly back to him. He reached the entrance and stood there. They beckoned him to come, but he shook his head. He was afraid.

A voice above the bridge something was coming down. It was nothing but a congenial little spring convocation of logs.

"Your friend Andrews is afraid," shouted Duryea to the girl. She nodded. At that moment something happened. With a roar and a crash like thunder and lightning a few of the logs struck one end of the bridge, and it went down. Duryea turned pale. He was impulsive. He was muscular and agile. And as a result in no time he had sprinted toward the other end and stood on terra firma. The girl was too dazed to move. The second edition of logs hurled itself against the bridge. The middle of the bridge went down. On the shore two men watched. The girl had disappeared.

One man cast himself upon the ground and cried aloud in frenzy. He was a muscular chap. His name was Duryea. The other stood watching and thinking. He thought twice before he acted. Suddenly he caught a glimpse of a pale face and a few tresses of golden hair still untouched by the flood.

Then he did a queer thing. He darted down the side of the stream for a hundred yards until he caught up with this pale face and golden hair. When he was even with it he leaped far out into the stream and worked his way through the muddy torrent and over the impetuous logs to the place where he had seen the face of the girl he loved. The flood had claimed her for an instant, but as her face again appeared Andrews claimed her from the flood. And then the fight began. It was the forest and the stream, both raging mad, against one man and the girl he held within his arms.

By this time a crowd lined the shore. Andrews never knew what he did or how he did it. His iron muscles wrestled and fought and buffeted with odds that he had never met before. He fought like a wild man—fought to regain the shore, fought to regain life for the girl and for himself. Suddenly there was a shout. Some one had thrown a rope. Andrews caught it. Then the crowd held its breath. Then of a sudden there was a mighty shout. There was one man that did not hear it. It was Andrews—Andrews, who had staggered up out of the torrent, out of the jaws of death, with his bride to be—Andrews, a man with a broken arm and a broken thigh. Slowly, he opened his eyes and looked at the girl who bent over him. "My name is Ivanhoe," he groaned, with a weary smile.

Sheep or Swine!

An example of the humor of the Puritan settlers in New England comes from old Newbury, a town which was incorporated so long ago as 1635. Although it was a staid community rather than a frivolous one, there was for many years an established town jest which was repeated in town meeting with unimpaired relish as often as its local officers were to be elected.

The lowest office in the gift of the people being that of town hog reeve, the person whose duty it is to herd and impound stray hogs, they had made it the custom to elect to that unenviable position the latest married resident of the place, fit or unfit, willing or unwilling.

Once—there must have been an especial spirit of audacity rife at town meeting on that occasion—they even went so far as to elect the Rev. Dr. Leonard Withington, then newly settled over the parish, and a committee, acting in a spirit of mirth, yet perhaps with a dash of inward trepidation, was sent to notify him of the honor, which, of course, it was expected he would not accept.

"Hog reeve," he repeated thoughtfully. "It is true I came to this place expecting to act as shepherd of a flock, but if my sheep have changed their character I see in that no reason to decline the task."

The reverend gentleman led, drove and exhorted his flock in the way they should go for the rest of his lifetime with notable success.—Youth's Companion.

Another Moving Job.

"Moving again, Fitz?" asked Pullet as Fitzgoober came out of the gate with a washtub tightly clasped in his arms and trailing a mirror behind him. "Yes," moaned the afflicted man, mopping his perspiring brow, "I'm going to leave this hole."

"What for? Don't you like the neighborhood?"

"Oh, no, not that; the neighbors are all right."

"Water not good, maybe?"

"No better can be found."

"The rent hasn't been raised, has it?"

"No; that's the reason I'm going to seek another house."

"What?" exclaimed the surprised Pullet. "Moving from a place because the rent has not been raised! Surely you don't object to that, Fitz?"

"No, I do not," sadly replied Fitz as he started back for the kitchen set of furniture, "but the landlord does, you know."—London Answers.

Back Numbers.

"William," said Mrs. Van Gelder to the man of all work, "I want you to clean out that large closet in the hall just outside the parlor. Burn all the old newspapers, waste paper and any other rubbish you may find there."

After a short time she met William in the hall carrying in his arms a huge pile of sheet music, the property of her eldest daughter.

"What are you going to do with Ma-bel's music?" she asked.

"Why, burn it, sure, as you told me to. It was in the closet there with the other rubbish."

"But I didn't mean the music. Put it back at once."

Noting his mistress' displeasure, William inquired in surprise:

"Why, hasn't she played it all?"—Littell's Living.



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Barnstable Fair.
An annual fair at Barnstable, England, has been held for hundreds of years. It was originally held in July, but the time was altered to September by a charter granted by Queen Mary. Barnstable fair is inaugurated with a ceremony in the town hall, where a special meeting of the town council is held and spiced ale and toast (prepared in the council chamber by the beadies and mace bearers) are dispensed to all who crowd the building. Appropriate toasts are proposed and speeches made by the local member of parliament and others, after which the mayor proceeds in procession to three points of the town, at each of which is read his proclamation opening the fair and enjoining all concerned to keep the peace during its continuance. Not until this ceremony has been performed can the business and fun of the fair proceed. On the inauguration of the fair a huge stuffed white glove, adorned with flowers, is thrust on a pole from one of the upper windows of the town hall and remains in evidence during the continuance of the festival as the symbol of open handed welcome.

Went Back on His Authority.
Freeman, the historian, was naturally familiar in the spirit to readers of the Saturday Review. In the flesh Mr. Leslie Stephen's single meeting with the historian was in the nature of a collision. "I came in contact with him only once, and at a later period. He wrote a life of Alfred for the Dictionary of National Biography under my editorship, but declined to do more because we had a difference of opinion as to whether Athelstan should be spelled with an 'A.' That was, I confess, a question to which I was culpably indifferent, but I had taken competent advice, and my system (I forget what it was) had been elsewhere sanctioned by the great historian Stubbs. Now, as Freeman was never tired of asserting the infallibility of Stubbs, I innocently thought that I might take refuge behind so eminent an authority. The result was that for once Freeman blasphemed Stubbs and refused to cooperate any longer in an unscholarlike enterprise."

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